

Two eggs, collected on October 11, 1903, are pale blue, blotched with brown and with underlying spots of lilac-grey. Measurements: axis 1·3 inch; diameter 0·85.

Two eggs, collected on October 2, 1903, are similar in ground-colour, but with the brown spots larger and much more pronounced. Axis 1·25–1·35 inch; diameter 0·9.

[This bird is also resident, but not common; it is one of the earliest breeders. The nest is built some fourteen to eighteen feet from the ground in the dense forest. Five eggs are a full clutch.—*W. F.*]

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XXIX.—*Remarks on some Birds of Western Australia.*

By THOMAS CARTER, M.B.O.U.

I PROPOSE to make a few remarks upon Mr. Ogilvie-Grant's paper on a collection of Birds from Western Australia which was published in 'The Ibis' for 1909, p. 650, and 1910, p. 156.

I may mention that I take a peculiar interest in this collection, as in 1903 I went to England, intending to stay, and took with me a collection of about five hundred bird-skins from Western Australia. My doctor, however, advised me not to risk remaining in England for the winter, so I offered the collection to the authorities of the British Museum, on their own terms; but it was refused and went to the Tring Museum. In the collection were skins of many species now described as new by Mr. Ogilvie-Grant. The last time I saw the late Dr. Bowdler Sharpe in 1909, almost the last words he said to me, and reiterated, were how much he regretted that they had not taken my collection when it was offered.

I. CORVUS CORONOIDES Vig. & Horsf.

The White-eyed Crow is very common from the Gascoyne River to the North-West Cape. Some, shot by me at various dates between December and April, had the irides partly hazel and partly white, in the transition-stage

from the hazel of the immature to the white of the adult. On July 18th, 1900, I noted that the irides of an almost fully fledged young bird in the nest were *slate-blue* in colour. As neither of the parent birds was secured, it is possible that the nestling was a *Corvus bennetti*.

*Corvus bennetti* was recorded by me as occurring at Point Cloates in N.W. Australia, in the 'Emu,' vol. iii. p. 212.

2. ZONEGINTHUS OCVLATUS Quoy & Gaim.

Mr. Shortridge states that the Red-eared Finch does not occur inland, but I found it plentiful at Balbarrup in the south-west, a distance of thirty-five miles from the nearest coast in February 1910.

3. ACANTHOCHÆRA CARUNCULATA (Lath.).

Mr. Shortridge remarks that the Red Wattle-bird "is rare in the coastal district of the extreme south-west, where its place is taken by *Anellobia lunulata*." I have found the Red Wattle-bird plentiful from Albany to the Vasse River all along the south-west coast, in the very months when Mr. Shortridge found it to be rare.

4. MELIORNIS LONGIROSTRIS (Gould).

The Long-billed Honey-eater occurs very plentifully round Broome Hill, which is about eighty-five miles inland. Beverley, where Mr. Shortridge found it "not common," is about seventy miles inland.

5. MELIORNIS MYSTACALIS Gould.

*Meliornis mystacalis* Mathews, Handlist, p. 98.

Mr. Shortridge, who collected a remarkably good series of birds from the various localities that he visited, has missed this handsome species, which occurs near Albany. I also secured specimens of it at Perth and near Broome Hill.

6. PTILOTIS ORNATA Gould.

Mr. Shortridge remarks that the Graceful Honey-eater was not observed in "the *coastal* district to the south of

Brookton." The township of Brookton is about twenty miles south of Beverley, and is about seventy-five miles from the coast, Beverley being about seventy. Yet when speaking of *Meliornis longirostris* he writes : " It occurs as far inland as Beverley."

The Graceful Honey-eater is one of the commonest species round Broome Hill (which is about a hundred and twenty miles south of Brookton), certainly by far the commonest of the Honey-eaters. It also occurs plentifully forty miles south of Broome Hill, and is to be found wherever the White Gum (*Eucalyptus redunca*) grows.

#### 7. PTILOTI SONORA Gould.

This Honey-eater occurs plentifully, as far, at least, as the North-West Cape, which is nearly three hundred miles further north than the Gascoyne River (see 'Emu,' vol. iii. p. 93).

#### 8. CERTHIONYX OCCIDENTALIS Grant.

*Certhionyx occidentalis* Grant, Ibis, 1909, p. 658.

Without having seen the single skin upon which Mr. Ogilvie-Grant has founded this new species, it appears to me that he has separated it from *C. variegatus* on very slight grounds. The skin from the North-West Cape referred to by Mr. Ogilvie-Grant as that of "A. G. Campbell" was collected by me. Mr. Shortridge found the last-named species to be rare round Carnarvon. In my notes on "Birds occurring in the Region of the North-West Cape" ('Emu,' vol. iii. p. 92) it is mentioned by me (under the name of *Entomophila leucomela*) as being one of the commonest winter visitors on the coast and inland, appearing as soon as the winter rains commence. Perhaps it was a dry season when Mr. Shortridge was on the Gascoyne River (for which Carnarvon is the post-town).

#### 9. GLYCYPHILA SUBOCULARIS Gould.

Neither Dr. Hartert nor Mr. A. J. North recognise this as a good species. The Brown Honey-eater (*Glycyphila ocellaris*) occurs regularly at Broome Hill (eighty-five miles

inland). Mr. Shortridge states that *G. subocularis* does not extend inland.

10. ACANTHORHYNCHUS SUPERCILIOSUS (Gould).

Mr. Shortridge's field-note states that "The Western Spine-billed Honey-eater was observed as far north as Beverley and Perth, but it *did not extend inland*" [my italics], yet he speaks of *Meliornis longirostris* and other species as occurring as far inland as Beverley. Anyone not well posted up in West Australian geography must be puzzled as to whether Beverley is on the coast or inland.

11. PARDALOTUS PUNCTATUS (Shaw & Nodd.).

I have observed and shot specimens of the Spotted Diamond bird in "Marlock" scrub, fully eighty miles from the coast.

12. ZOSTEROPS GOULDI (Bonap.).

The range of the Green-backed White-eye extends to Point Cloates and most probably further north ('Emu,' vol. iii. p. 91).

13. ZOSTEROPS SHORTRIDGII Grant.

*Zosterops shortridgii* Grant, Ibis, 1909, p. 663.

Mr. Ogilvie-Grant describes this new species also from a single specimen, not very much material upon which to work in such a difficult genus as *Zosterops*. Possibly he was under the impression that it is an insular form, but this it cannot be, as Rabbit Island, where the bird was obtained, is only separated from the mainland by a channel about two hundred yards in width, broken into three by two rocky islets, so that a bird of very weak flying power could easily cross it. Rabbit Island (called "Mistaken Island" on some maps) is about a hundred and fifty acres in area. I thoroughly searched it in March last, being on it all day, and to my disappointment never saw a *Zosterops*: the only land-birds observed were *Halcyon sanctus*, *Acanthiza apicalis*, and *Eopsaltria georgiana*. The bird described as new by Mr. Ogilvie-Grant must have come from the mainland,

and if it is a distinct species it appears remarkable that Mr. Shortridge did not procure more specimens when he was camped at Big Grove (apparently for some time), as that locality is on the mainland and barely three miles from Rabbit Island. I myself have collected along the mainland coast opposite Rabbit Island on many occasions.

14. *ZOSTEROPS BALSTONI* Grant.

*Zosterops balstoni* Grant, Ibis, 1909, p. 663.

The pair of skins referred to by Mr. Ogilvie-Grant as "procured at North-West Cape, *A. G. Campbell*," were shot by me, and apparently the bird I mentioned as *Z. lutea* ('Emu,' vol. iii. p. 91) was Balston's White-eye. This species usually occurs in the mangroves, but in the winter months flocks of considerable size leave their shelter and feed on the scrubby coast sand-hills and more open country. In February 1900, a male bird shot in the mangroves near the North-West Cape was apparently breeding there. Probably the nest and eggs, described in the 'Victorian Naturalist,' vol. xviii. p. 31, as those of *Zosterops lutea* are referable to *Z. balstoni* ('Emu,' vol. ii. p. 49).

15. *CLIMACTERIS WELLSI* Grant.

*Climacteris wellsi* Grant, Ibis, 1909, p. 664.

Although Tree-Creepers were never observed near Point Cloates—there being no timber within a radius of thirty miles, and very little there—I found an egg sixty miles inland (south-east) from that place, which, being unknown to me, was forwarded to Mr. A. J. Campbell for identification. He replied that there was no doubt that it was that of a Tree-Creeper, and asked me what species occurred in the locality. The egg was placed in a small hollow in a stunted tree about four feet from the ground, and seemed to have been forsaken on account of rain-water having entered and lodged in the nest. There is little doubt that it was an egg of *C. wellsi*.

16. *NEOSITTA PILEATA* (Gould).

The Black-capped Tree-Runner was seen and secured by me on several occasions about forty miles inland from Point

Cloates in stunted timber ('Emu,' vol. iii. p. 91). This extends its range about two hundred miles north of Mr. Shortridge's observations.

17. *PACHYCEPHALA GILBERTI* Gould.

*Pachycephala gilberti* Math. Hand-l. p. 86.

Gilbert's Thickhead is an interesting species which occurs rather numerously about this district, but apparently did not come under Mr. Shortridge's notice. It is, however, a bird that may easily be overlooked, unless attention is attracted by its loud and peculiar notes.

18. *GYMNORHINA LEUCONOTA* Gray.

Mr. Ogilvie-Grant ascribes the "Magpies" procured by Mr. Shortridge in the South-west and Central inland districts to *G. leuconota*, thereby differing in opinion from such sound naturalists as Campbell, Hall, and Milligan, who have studied the question of the West Australian Magpies closely. There is no doubt a great deal yet to be learnt respecting the various stages of plumages.

19. *ARTAMUS PERSONATUS* Gould.

Mr. Shortridge says the appearance of the Masked Wood-Swallow in the south-west is very uncertain. My experience of this species, both in the north-west and south-west, is that it is usually seen during spells of dry hot weather with an east wind.

20. *ARTAMUS CINEREUS* Vieill.

*Artamus cinereus* Math. Hand-l. p. 84.

It seems curious that the Grey-breasted Wood-Swallow, the most typical West Australian form of this genus, was not noted by Mr. Shortridge. It occurs in the Gascoyne and north-west districts in great numbers, usually in the winter months, when it breeds freely.

21. *STIPITURUS MALACURUS* (Shaw).

The Emu-Wren does not always reside in swampy flats, as I have seen and shot specimens on the dry open sand plain to the east of both Busselton and Broome Hill.

## 22. MALURUS SPLENDENS (Quoy &amp; Gaim.).

Mr. Shortridge "did not meet with this species in Albany," although it is fairly plentiful around that district. I should say that it is considerably more numerous than *M. elegans*. It is not uncommon in the Broome Hill district and still further to the eastward.

## 23. MALURUS LEUCOPTERUS Quoy &amp; Gaim.

I agree with Mr. North and Mr. Ogilvie-Grant that it is doubtful whether this species and *M. leuconotus* are distinct. When residing at Point Cloates, where *M. leucopterus* was plentiful, I found birds that might have been ascribed to *M. leuconotus*. The appearance of more or less white depends a good deal upon the making of a skin.

## 24. MALURUS BERNIERI Grant.

*Malurus bernieri* Grant, Ibis, 1909, p. 676, pl. ix. fig. 2.

Mr. Ogilvie-Grant remarks that it is curious that two skins of this new species, procured in June and July, were in summer plumage. Perhaps they are late breeders. I saw the young of *M. leucopterus* still in the nest on December 8th, 1898 at the North-West Cape, and the young of *M. splendens* in the nest at Busselton, early in January 1888.

## 25. MALURUS PULCHERRIMUS Gould.

On August the 28th, 1908, I shot two females and a male of the Blue-breasted "Wren" near Broome Hill which were still partly in summer plumage, when the bulk of birds here were in "full-breeding" plumage.

## 26. SERICORNIS MACULATA Gould.

The Spotted Scrub-Wren occurs on the Pallenings River at a spot fully ninety miles inland. Mr. Shortridge says "it does not extend its range far inland." I have specimens that vary considerably in the colour and markings of the under parts.

## 27. SERICORNIS BALSTONI Grant.

*Sericornis balstoni* Grant, Ibis, 1909, p. 677, pl. ix. fig. 1.

In his description of this new species Mr. Ogilvie-Grant has not stated in what particulars it mainly differs from

*S. maculata*. It would be difficult to distinguish between the two species by merely reading his description of *S. balstoni* and that of Mr. A. J. North's *S. maculata*.

28. ACANTHIZA UROPYGIALIS Gould.

Mr. Shortridge states: "The Chestnut-rumped Tit is the only species that occurs so far north as the Gascoyne River, where, however, it is rare." I found it not uncommon in the scrub inland from Point Cloates, two hundred miles further north ('Emu,' vol. iii. p. 37).

29. RHIPIDURA TRICOLOR (Vieill.).

The Black-and-White Fantail *does* occur at Albany, but it is very seldom seen there. Mr. Shortridge says it "does not occur."

30. SMICRORNIS BREVIROSTRIS Gould.

Mr. Shortridge says that the Short-tailed Tree-Tit occurs as far south as Wagin. It is not uncommon round Broome Hill, forty-four miles further south.

31. PETRÆCA CAMPBELLI Sharpe.

Both *Petræca campbelli* and *P. goodenovii* are found in the Broome Hill district. *P. goodenovii* occurs regularly in the winter months right down to the beach from Carnarvon to the N.W. Cape.

32. HALCYON SANCTUS Vig. & Horsf.

Mr. Shortridge says that "the Sacred Kingfisher is said to occur as far north as Houtmans Abrolhos." I have shot specimens at Point Cloates, and it occurs all through West Australia within a certain radius of the coast (see 'Emu,' vol. ii. p. 50).

33. DACELO CERVINA Gould.

Mr. Shortridge says "the Fawn-breasted Kingfisher was plentiful on the Gascoyne River and extended *as far north as Murchison*." The Gascoyne River is from a hundred and fifty to two hundred miles to *the north* of the Murchison River, running roughly parallel to it.

34. MELOPSITTACUS UNDULATUS Shaw.

Mr. Shortridge states that "the Warbling Grass-Parakeet



is never found in the extreme south-west." In 1907 and 1908 there were great numbers of these birds breeding round Broome Hill, which is certainly within the S.W. corner.

35. *BARNARDIUS SEMITORQUATUS*.

Mr. Ogilvie-Grant states that both this species and *B. zonarius* occur at Beverley, and so they do at Broome Hill, where intermediate forms have caused me much perplexity. A large series of skins from various localities is required to form a definite conclusion respecting them. Observing the changes of plumage in caged birds would also be of great assistance.

36. *PLATYCERCUS XANTHOGENYS* Salvad.

It is exceedingly interesting to have this species confirmed from a definite locality. I have not seen Dr. Hartert's description of the specimens in the Tring Museum, and have often wondered why none had been obtained around Broome Hill, which is situated between Beaufort River and Cranbrook. *P. icterotis* is very common in that district, and I have observed many birds with feathers on the back margined broadly with red, and still more so on the rump and upper tail-coverts. Mr. Ogilvie-Grant surmises that Beaufort and Cranbrook are in West Australia. Good maps of this Colony can be secured gratis, on application to the Agent-General in Victoria Street, and a little study of them would have proved that his surmise is correct. The Beaufort River is a little to the south and west of Wagin, and is a tributary of the Blackwood River. Cranbrook is a township on the Great Southern Railway, eighty miles south of Wagin and seventy miles north of Albany.

37. *CACATUA GYMNOPSIS* Sclater.

Mr. Ogilvie-Grant says that the occurrence of this species in the western division of West Australia shews a considerable extension of its range. It was known to occur in the interior of Queensland, New South Wales, and South Australia, and possibly in North-western Australia. Apparently Mr. Ogilvie-Grant is not well posted in the literature of West Australia

or he would not have supposed that his is the first record of the occurrence of the Bare-eyed Cockatoo in this State. It is *the* common Cockatoo of the North-west, and was recorded as occurring there twenty-three years ago: see Proc. Roy. Soc. Vict. vol. iii. p. 4 (*Campbell*); 'Emu,' vol. i. p. 25 (*Campbell*); 'Emu,' vol. iii. p. 171 (*Carter*); 'Emu,' vol. ii. p. 62 (*Hall*); 'Hall's Key,' p. 62; 'Emu,' vol. iv. p. 38 (*Kilgour*); Nov. Zool. xii. p. 211 (*Hartert*). Rather curiously Mr. Mathews in his 'Handlist' has not given West Australia as one of the States where it occurs. *C. gymnopsis* seems to be very close to *C. sanguinea*.

### 38. *CIRCUS ASSIMILIS* Jard. & Selby.

Mr. Shortridge says: "The Allied Harrier is probably less numerous than *C. gouldi* in the south-west." If it occurs at all in the south-west it must be very rarely, as I have never yet seen one in that part, but I found that it was plentiful in the north-west ('Emu,' iii. p. 31).

### 39. *PLOTUS NOVÆ-HOLLANDIÆ* Gould.

The Darter is certainly seldom seen in the west or south-west districts. During my twenty-four years' residence in West Australia only two occurrences have come under my notice, one at Point Cloates, the other on the Pallenup River in the extreme south.

### 40. *NETTION GIBBERIFRONS* S. Müll.

It seems very curious that there is still so much doubt as to whether *Nettion gibberifrons* and *N. castaneum* are two distinct species or not. My experience is that *N. gibberifrons* is a freshwater Duck. I have seen great numbers both in the north-west and south-west, as it is a common species, and, if the green head and neck are ever assumed, the birds must breed freely in immature plumage. I have seen scores of birds on swamps and pools around which were many nests, and have shot many male birds, undoubtedly breeding, that had no trace of a green head or neck, but have seen only one place where *N. castaneum* occurs, namely, in a mangrove creek (sea-water) near the North-West Cape many miles from

any fresh water, where there were usually numbers of this handsome Duck. On one occasion I shot and skinned a young male that had no green on the head and neck, but had the rich chocolate-brown on the breast, and I shot and dissected an undoubted female that had a most pronounced glossy green head and neck and red-brown breast. In my paper "Exploration of North-West Cape," 'Emu,' ii. p. 81, line 13, the word *not* was unfortunately printed instead of *most*, through a printer's error.

41. *EUPODOTIS AUSTRALIS* (J. E. Gray).

Mr. Shortridge states that "the Australian Bustard is less abundant in the S.W. and does not extend to the coast." It certainly occurs regularly within a mile or two of the coast from a few miles north of the Swan River to the N.W. Cape. At Point Cloates I have often seen it on the beach.

42. *BURHINUS GRALLARIUS* (Lath.).

Mr. Shortridge states that "the Southern Stone-Plover is known as the '*wheelo*' among the colonists." They usually call it a Curlew. According to my experience, "*wheelo*" is the aboriginal name. Most probably the Stone-Plover that Mr. Shortridge saw about Carnarvon and Bernier Island was *Orthorhamphus magnirostris*.

43. *ORTHORHAMPHUS MAGNIROSTRIS* Vieill.

This species occurred and bred regularly about the North-West Cape, but I never observed it south of Point Cloates. It would be interesting to record it outside the Tropics.

44. *ZONIFER TRICOLOR* (Vieill.).

Mr. Shortridge says "the Black-breasted Plover is a regular migrant round '*Cape*' York." Probably he means the town of York, which is about forty-five miles east of Perth in West Australia. It is a "far cry" from there to Cape York (roughly about 2200 miles).

45. *HÆMATOPUS LONGIROSTRIS* Vieill.

Mr. Shortridge remarks that this species appeared to be "a less robust bird than *H. fuliginosus*, as it was rarely

found on the windward side of the island" (Bernier Island). I have never been on this island, but the windward (west) side is most probably rocky, and *H. fuliginosus* is not infrequently seen on a rocky coast, whereas *H. longirostris* seems to prefer a sandy beach (see 'Emu,' vol. iii. p. 175). Last March I watched a pair of Sooty Oyster-catchers busily feeding on the south side of Rabbit Island (near Albany) which is almost all rocky ground.

#### 46. CESTRELATA MACROPTERA Smith.

Mr. Shortridge was fortunate in meeting with this species breeding on Rabbit Island, as I believe that it has not previously been recorded in West Australia. When I was on this island all the numerous nesting-burrows of Little Penguins were empty, the eggs having been robbed or the young having left the nests.

#### 47. PODICIPES NOVÆ-HOLLANDIÆ Steph.

This is a regular breeder at Broome Hill, there being a nest every year on nearly all my stock-tanks. Mr. Shortridge says that it is an uncertain visitor.

#### 48. PUFFINUS CARNEIPES Gould.

This appears to be the commonest species of Petrel breeding on the neighbouring island of Brealesea (5½ miles distant), whence I have procured birds and eggs.

#### 49. SYNÆCUS SORDIDUS Gould.

The Brown or Swamp Quail occurs rather commonly round Albany, but this species seems to have escaped the keen observation of Mr. Shortridge.

In conclusion, I may say that in a paper of such importance as this the geographical part should, in my opinion, have been made as accurate as possible, while the localities mentioned should have been clearly and simply defined. How many readers are aware that the first ten places mentioned on Mr. Ogilvie-Grant's list are within a radius of twelve miles from Albany? The whole list of localities would have been more conveniently arranged for reference if they had been bracketed under the four heads of, say, Albany, Beverley, Inland Central, and Gascoyne.